

THE
CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

VOL. IV.]

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1819.

[NO. 16]

EDITED AND PUBLISHED BY JOSHUA T. RUSSELL.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

DOMESTICK.

ADDRESS

TO THE AMERICAN SOCIETY, FOR COLONIZING THE
FREE PEOPLE OF COLOUR OF THE U. S.

Read at a special meeting in the city of Washington, Nov. 21, 1818.

(Continued from page 232, vol. 4.)

THE ACTUAL STATE OF THE WESTERN COAST OF AFRICA.

When we look upon the western coast of Africa, as upon a map, we find the capes Verde, Roxo, Mount, Palmas, and others projecting into the sea;—we find the rivers Senegal, Gambia, Grande, Sierra Leone, Boom, Volta, Calebar, Cameroon, Gaboon; Congo or Zaire, and a multitude of smaller rivers rolling their waters into the African Atlantick. We find the great bays Benin and Biafra. We find the capes Verde, Sierra Leone, Mount, and Palmas high and airy, and passing into the interior twenty, fifty, and an hundred miles, nearly any where on the coast, we find ridges of hills and mountains, many of which are visible in clear weather from the sea.

There are no capes on the coast of the United States, with the exception of Cape Cod, more projecting than the capes of western Africa; there are no rivers in the United States, with the exception of the Mississippi, larger or longer than the Senegal and Gambia; there are no mountains along our coast more prominent or imposing than Sierra Leone, and capes Mount and Palmas. It is to be remarked, however, respecting the rivers of tropical regions, that they overflow their banks to a greater or less extent in the rainy seasons, and carry down a quantity of mud and vegetable substance, proportional to the length, magnitude, and velocity of the rivers, which is deposited in alluvial banks, islands, and shoals, near their mouths. Considering this fact in its true importance, it is as worthy of notice that any such rivers are navigable as that many are blocked up. The largest are as liable to obstructions as the smallest. The entrance of the Senegal is hazardous. The Gambia is open. The Sierra Leone and several others will admit ships of any size a moderate distance.

The claims of Europeans to the right of soil in western Africa, are confined to narrow limits.—Strictly speaking, the only Euro-

pean possessions on the main land, are the English colony of Sierra Leone, and the Portuguese colonies of Loango and Angola;—otherwise the right of soil on the main land may be considered to belong to the native kings and people, from the desert Sahara to the Cape of Good Hope. Including islands, however, the coast has more of a European aspect. The French occupy the small islands, St. Louis in the Senegal, and Goree near Cape Verde. The English occupy the small island St. James, in the Gambia; and, recently, Banyan Point on the south bank of the same river, for the use of which they allow an annual stipend to the king of Combo. The Portuguese occupy the island Bissao at the mouth of Rio Grande. Bulama, an island in the same cluster, was once bought by an English company for colonization, and afterwards forsaken. Bance and York islands, the former in the Sierra Leone river, and the latter in Sherbro sound, were once occupied by an English company for the slave-trade, and now deserted. The Dutch have three military and commercial establishments on the Gold Coast, the principal of which is St. George de la Mina, usually abbreviated to Elmina. The English have eight or ten similar establishments on the same coast, the principal of which is Cape Corse Castle. The Danes have four, the principal of which is Christiansburg.

It may be understood, that all these stations on the Gold Coast are forts, the relics of slave-trade establishments, which are now maintained for purposes of honourable trade, having no claim to soil, unless by occupation, and no influence out of the immediate vicinity of the forts. The African Atlantick islands, as the Madeira and Cape Verde islands, Prince, St. Thomas, and Annabona, are in the possession of the Portuguese. The Canaries are Spanish. Hence, it is apparent, that with the exception of Sierra Leone and the islands, all the European establishments on the western coast of Africa may be considered as places of trade only, attended by a sufficient military force for their protection, leaving a coast of about three thousand miles in the hands of the native Africans. If, therefore, free people of colour, descendants of Africans, were desirous to have a share in the possessions of their ancestors, it can hardly be doubted that they would have a right to negotiate with the native kings and people for districts of land, wherever they might choose, and make no reference to any European government, unless they might wish to obtain such portions of land as have been purchased, or are now occupied, by Europeans. But if another people or government, as the American, is to superintend the establishment, at least for a time, and to negotiate with the African princes for lands, though exclusively for the benefit of the people of colour, it may be a matter of courtesy and propriety to make a reference of the subject to such European government or governments as may have possessions in the immediate vicinity. And since the settlements, if any, are designed to be agricultural and for the improvement of Africans and their descendants, there is little reason to doubt that the same humane dispositions, which have abolished the slave-trade and have persevered in good exertions in be-

half of the same people at Sierra Leone and in other places, will give a cordial assent to our arrangements. Mutual counsel and support, in prosecuting the same general objects, will be highly desirable. All delicacy on this question will be precluded, if, as may hereafter be judged expedient, the American society should obtain by cession or purchase some islands or stations now occupied by Europeans, which are not esteemed sources of revenue, but channels of expenditure, to their respective governments. In this case, no overtures need be made to the native princes, except from motives of conciliation, until an enlargement of territory shall be necessary by the great numbers of the people of colour, who may seek an asylum in that country. Districts of land can then be obtained from them, at any time and almost any where, by fair purchase. Happy will it be for the descendants of Africans in foreign lands, if that continent may be reserved for their possessions. It would most assuredly be pre-occupied, if the complexion and physical structure of Europeans enabled them to bear the climate with the same ease as the people of colour; and then the descendants of Africans, alienated from the abodes of their fathers, might wander through the earth and not find a land to dwell in, where the power of prejudice would not reach them.

The African nations along the western coast are divided into small, independent kingdoms and republics. The form of government has for its basis the patriarchal; but in different places, it verges towards the two extremes of a pure democracy or a military despotism. Each town has its head-man or governor. Several of these towns and head men profess allegiance to one particular head-man, usually venerable for age, whom they address as king and father. Thus, by a subordination, nominal rather than real, a whole people look up to one man as their father and king. Tribute is not common, whether from the people to their head-man, or from the subordinate head-men to the king. The nominal king often has much less physical force in his town or towns, than many of the subordinate head-men. What, in some measure, supplies the place of a regular tribute, is the universal practice of giving presents. When a stranger wishes to trade with them, settle among them, or pass through their territories, he takes a present in his hand and makes his addresses to the head-man, in the presence of the people:—When one head-man visits another, whether on business or for friendly intercourse, he usually takes a small present—When a person brings a suit into public council, he lays a present before the head-man, even if his poverty allows him to bring only a few cola nuts. In all cases the amount of the present depends on the generosity of the individual; but it is expected to be proportional to his rank, wealth, or the importance of his business. All business is discussed in the assembly of the people. The king or head-man presides; the elders and princes speak according to age and rank. Most of the head-men have one or more domestick attendants, but very few on the whole coast, have any kind of military guard. “Much of their time,” says Dr. Winter-

bottom, "is taken up by settling disputes among themselves or neighbours, which they call talking palavers, and of which they are so fond, that Africa, at the present day, may well deserve the title formerly given to it, *nutricular caudicorum*.

The territory of each nation is small, seldom presenting a side of more than eighty or a hundred miles, and sometimes of not more than thirty or forty miles. They are usually separated by rivers, ridges of hills or extended forests. When none of these natural boundaries intervene, their towns stand intermingled along the borders of their territories. The Mandingoes and Foulhas, in particular, go and establish themselves wherever they please. Their superiour intelligence, being Mohomedans, and their ability to read and write the Arabick, give them an ascendancy over the more artless pagans. The only right to soil, known in Africa, is that of occupation. While one occupies a spot or cultivates a field they are his, but after that, they become publick property. Houses, furniture, domestick fowls and cattle, fruit-trees, canoes, &c. are private property. Lands, woods, springs of water, &c. are publick property. As occupation constitutes the only right to soil, it might not be expedient in forming settlements to purchase extensive tracts of land, which could not soon be occupied; especially as there is every reason to believe, that lands may be purchased at any future period, when desired, on the same advantageous terms as in the first instance.

The aspect of the African continent from the sea, with the exception of a few prominent places, is that of an extended forest. When we were on the coast, just before the rainy season, volumes of smoke were seen rolling into the air from hundreds of plantations, clearing by the native for their rice, maize, yams, and cassada. The towns along the coast are always small, compactly built, remarkably neat, and closely environed by fruit and forest trees and luxuriant shrubbery, which quite conceal them from the view of a stranger. He walks along a narrow path, richly overhung with wild vines and thick foliage, until he is surprised to find himself in the midst of a village.—When the towns are built immediately on the margin of rivers or on islands, so perfect concealment is impossible. Their plantations are usually two or three miles from the towns. This studious concealment of their towns has doubtless grown out of the system of slave-trade, which rendered it common to surround and burn towns by night, and catch the inhabitants as they fled. The unsuspecting villager might one minute be sleeping on his mat, and the next minute be concealed in the thickest forest, if he had the good fortune in his trepidation not to run directly into the arms of his enemies. In the vicinity of Sierra Leone, however, where life and safety are more secure, the inhabitants of some towns have acquired sufficient confidence to cut away the forest and shrubbery, and to allow the land and sea breezes a free passage through—contributing much to their health and happiness. A town on the coast has seldom more than one hundred cottages, and three hundred souls,—of whom thirty may be

men. But in proportion as the slave-trade is extinguished, the population of the country will increase and the number of each sex become more equal. As it is intended, if our people remove thither, that they shall go with peaceful dispositions, with a fair purchase of lands and with humane endeavours to improve the state of the native Africans, there is little reason to apprehend a future trial of their comparative strength.

The soil of the western coast of Africa will admit of the advantageous culture of all productions common to tropical climates. The staple article of subsistence is rice;—this is of a good quality and may be produced in the greatest quantities. The cotton shrub is found, wild and luxuriant, nearly any where on the coast. The natives gather the wool in such quantities as their necessities and imperfect mode of manufacture require. By judicious culture its quality might be improved and its quantity increased indefinitely. The coffee plant grows well, and needs nothing but attention to make it an article of exportation. The indigo plant, of one species, grows wild: this might be cultivated, or a new species introduced. The sugar-cane grows spontaneously and to a good size. The palma christi, from the seeds of which the castor oil is extracted, is found in many places. Cassia, ginger, cinnamon, and black pepper are known; and some kinds of pepper and spice are wild and common. The fruits are pine apples, oranges, limes, bananas, and plantains, which are abundant and delicious. The edible roots are yams, cassada, sweet potatoes and ground-nuts. Horticultural plants, from utter neglect, appear to be few. A refined oil, extracted from the seeds of palm-nuts, supplies the place of butter and lard among the natives, and is in general use. Common palm-oil is exported in moderate quantities. Domestick fowls, hogs and goats, thrive well, and multiply fast. Muscovy ducks and sheep are not uncommon. Cattle may be increased indefinitely, with care. The species of horse, common among the Moors and Foutas, might be introduced any where. Shell and scale fish are found in considerable quantities in the bays and rivers. The wild game are a species of antelope, (flintombo,) wild pigs and guinea-hens. The only wild animals of note, are the elephant, leopard, and monkey. Fame has greatly exaggerated truth respecting the number of reptiles and insects in Africa, even if animal nature should be acknowledged prolifick, as vegetable nature is luxuriant.

Should American settlements be made in Africa, after attending to the ordinary means of subsistence, health and comfort, the colonists should devote themselves to the culture of rice and cotton; coffee, indigo, sugar, and different kinds of spice will afterwards deserve attention. By all means, agriculture, and not trade, should be the basis of the colony.

The articles of honourable commerce along the coast vary somewhat at different places. The imports are cloths, iron, tobacco, rum, fire-arms, powder, and toys. The exports from the Senegal, are chiefly gold dust and gums; from the Gambia, ivory, hides, and beeswax; from Sierra Leone, rice, camwood, and ship timber;—

from the districts south indefinitely, ivory, gold dust, malaguetta-pepper, palm oil, and dye-woods. It is easy to imagine how the imports and exports would be improved in kind and quantity, if agriculture were prosecuted to the same extent as trade. For, it is not to be forgotten in this enumeration, that the principal articles of import are such as tend to demoralize and to destroy, and the principal articles of export are the persons of those who happen not to be destroyed, however they may be demoralized.

(*To be continued.*)

AN ADDRESS

FROM THE MANAGERS OF THE EDUCATION SOCIETY,

To the Churches under the care of the General Assembly.

DEAR BRETHREN—Never, perhaps, have the inhabitants of any christian country had more reason than we, to adopt the language of our Lord—“*the harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few.*” Were it possible, within the limits of the present address, to state in detail the facts which lead to this conclusion, their impression on the pious mind would be equally distressing and alarming. Suffice it to say, that the population of our country is making progress with a rapidity altogether disproportioned to the provision of able and faithful ministers to supply its wants. In less than twenty years, its amount will probably be doubled; and yet the candidates for the ministry, who are coming forward, are very little more than sufficient to supply the places of those who are removed by death. What then is to become of the tens of thousands, the hundreds of thousands, who are annually spreading themselves in every part of our extended territory? And besides this, what is to become of all those applications for labourers in foreign missions, which are every day becoming more numerous? If we had four or five, nay, even ten times as many candidates as we have, they would be still insufficient to answer the demand. Calls of the most urgent and affecting kind, both for stated pastors and for missionaries, are received from almost every part of our country, without the possibility of furnishing them. Unless prompt and energetick means are adopted to obtain a supply, greatly beyond what has been hitherto obtained, the consequences must be, so far as human foresight can anticipate, that many important congregations must soon, either be without ministers, or fall off to other denominations; and that many districts of country, the population of which must naturally belong to our church, must either be left to seek a supply as they can from other churches, or to grow up in practical heathenism.

We rejoice indeed, in the mighty plans for disseminating the scriptures, which so remarkably and gloriously characterise our day; and we calculate largely on the benefits likely to arise from the execution of these plans. But we acknowledge it lessens our joy, when we reflect, that there are so few *living teachers* to accompany the *written word*. For we are assured by the Word itself, which we circulate, that the living teacher is as fixed and as

necessary a means of carrying on the dispensation of mercy to our fallen race, as that sacred Word, which is "the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." "How shall men hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" If the world were filled with Bibles, there must still be ministers to explain and enforce their precious contents. Of course, while to spread the former is an object of so much laudable exertion, it is certainly to be lamented, that the friends of piety have not been proportionably roused to the deep importance of providing the latter.

The attention of the friends of religion, has indeed been, for several years past, partially called to this object. Different measures have been proposed, and some actually adopted, to remedy the evil. But, though all useful, and some of them important, they have still been found insufficient to meet the exigencies of the church. Amidst all that has been done, and is doing, the deficiency complained of, is every day becoming more serious and appalling. To sit still and attempt nothing further, is really little less than abandoning a large part of our country to a *famine of the Word of Life*. Can *christians* consent to an alternative so disgraceful and destructive?

In these circumstances, it has appeared to some judicious friends of religion, that the formation of *societies*, for the special purpose of selecting, and gratuitously educating poor and pious youth for the gospel ministry, is a peculiarly well adapted and important means of attaining the desired end. Some societies of this kind have actually been organized several years ago, and are making laudable exertions to supply the wants of the church. Among these, the *American Education Society*, in New England, is worthy of particular notice and of high commendation. That society, including its several auxiliary associations, is said to have, at this time, more than two hundred young men under their care, in different stages of education, for the ministry. That respectable institution; however, besides that all its resources will be required for supplying the demands of New England, cannot, on other accounts, so well answer the purposes of the Presbyterian Church, as an association within our own bounds, and directed by our own members.

A plan for the formation of a society, such as that which now solicits the patronage of the Presbyterian Church in the U. States, has been in the contemplation of a number of the ministers of that church, for some months. It was their wish that the society should be, as far as possible, a representative of our church; that it should combine her strength, and be rendered, in all respects, subservient to her interests. For this purpose they deemed it of great moment that it should be permanently located at Philadelphia, and that its annual meetings should always take place in that city, and during the session of the general assembly in each year; that the distant ministers and elders of the church, who attend that judicatory, might be enabled, without any additional inconvenience, to dis-

charge their duty as members or officers of the society; that the affairs of the institution might be annually inspected, and as far as proper, controuled by the members of the assembly; and thus a more minute knowledge of its plan and proceedings, and a deeper interest in its affairs extended to every part of our church.

Such an association, in this address, and in the accompanying constitution offers itself to the patronage of the Presbyterian church.

It may, perhaps, appear to some, in this day of liberal exertion, when partition walls which have hitherto divided christians are daily falling down, and when different denominations are coming together for exertion in a common cause—in such a day, it may appear to some, as if confining this society to the Presbyterian Church were scarcely defensible. We wish to cherish no feelings, nor to engage in any plan which may be considered as unfriendly to other portions of the Church of Christ. We rejoice in the growing spirit of harmony and love among the different denominations of christians. But we are persuaded, that in concerns of this nature, both energy and harmony of action are best secured by each particular church acting for itself. Let as many denominations as approach to agreement in sentiment, come together, and mutually co-operate in great missionary plans, for spreading the knowledge of our common salvation:—but surely there is no concern in which every church is more clearly called upon to act independently, than in selecting and training her own ministers; and if each church act for herself in this matter, with a proper spirit, such a method of proceeding will be found to produce a generous and useful emulation, rather than hostile feelings.

Some, however, may be at a loss to know in what manner such a society as now solicits your patronage, will be likely to increase the number of candidates for the ministry. It cannot, of course, either make young men pious, or impart talents to them. This is readily acknowledged. But still such an association can do much. None who are acquainted with the state of the church, will doubt, that there are at this moment in our country, at the plough and in the shop of the mechanick, many valuable young men, of ardent piety and of good natural talents, who would be glad to serve the church in any way that Providence might point out, but who have no means of their own for obtaining a suitable education for the holy ministry; and who, left to themselves, will never come forward for that purpose. One great business of this society, and its auxiliary branches, (one, at least, of which it is hoped will be formed in every presbytery,) will be to search out such pious and promising youth; to inform them of the provision made for their case; to take them by the hand; to overcome their diffidence; to bring them forward to the view of the churches; and to conduct them through every stage of their education, until they are prepared for the pulpit.

It is not proposed to collect the young men supported by this society in any one place, or to require them to pursue their academical or theological course at any one seminary; but to educate them

wherever it may be most convenient to themselves, most economical, and most agreeable to the several auxiliary societies who may select and support them.

It is possible that some may altogether doubt the propriety of educating ministers on charitable funds, under the impression that it is, on the whole, best that all candidates for the ministry should support themselves; and even some of the youth who might be selected as the objects of this bounty, may feel reluctant to accept of charitable aid.

In reply to all objections of this kind, let it be observed, that very few who are able to support themselves, appear to be coming forward to the work of the ministry; that the exertions of this society will, by no means, diminish the number of such; but that if no others are brought forward, large portions of our country must experience a famine of hearing the Word of the Lord.

But do not all scruples, on the part either of the church or of young men, on this subject, arise from the want of correct attention to some radical principles? Is not the church the moral parent of all the youth within her bosom? Has she not a right to the services of the best of them? And may it not be asserted, without fear of rashness, that in the present state of the church and of the world, whenever young men are found who unite fervent piety with the natural talents adapted to the office, it is the duty of such to seek the gospel ministry; and that it is equally the duty of the church to single them out, and if they have not the means of coming forward themselves, to bring them forward, and to endeavour to give them all that preparation which depends on human means, for the service of the sanctuary. It is as clearly her duty, a duty which she as really owes both to her Divine Head and to herself, as the ordinary provision which she makes for the support of the word and ordinances. Or rather, it is to be lamented, that she has not been always in the habit of considering this, as an essential part of her ordinary provision for the maintenance of the means of grace.

If any of the children of the church need assistance in obtaining an education for the sacred office, from what source can they so properly receive it as from the church, their moral parent? Every consideration of nature, reason and scripture, point to this parent as the most suitable provider. Assistance from individuals may be given reluctantly, or may be suddenly and capriciously withdrawn; but the church, as long as she has the feelings of a mother, can never be either reluctant or weary in providing for her beloved children. The aid received from individuals may excite, in delicate minds, a painful sense of dependence—but it would surely be improper for a child to feel pain in receiving from the hand of parental affection. Nay, may we not confidently assert, that when a pious youth is willing to devote his talents for life to the service of the church, it is but an act of mere justice in the church to furnish him with the means of comfortable support while he is preparing to serve her?

Nor is it any solid objection to the system of educating young men for the ministry on charitable funds, that some of them, after obtaining an education, never enter the ministry; and that some others are by no means distinguished ornaments of the sacred office. It were just as reasonable for parents, according to the flesh to say, that many youth whose parents do much for them, turn out ill; and that, therefore, *they* will take no pains and incur no expense in educating their beloved offspring. No wise parent thinks or speaks thus: he is willing to do all in his power for promoting the welfare of his children, and to labour and incur expense whenever there is a rational prospect of a favourable result; and having done so, to leave the event with infinite wisdom. And the church ought to be willing to take the same course, and run the same risk with respect to her children.

We shall attempt to obviate only one more objection, which may possibly find a place in the minds of some. It is, that the presbyteries are already doing, and have been doing, for a number of years, all that they can to bring forward and educate young men for the gospel ministry; and, therefore, that such a society as is now proposed is unnecessary. This objection, though specious, has no real solidity. It is notorious to all who attend the general assembly, and listen to the annual reports of presbyteries on this subject, that the system now in operation is inefficient and inadequate. A number of the presbyteries pay little attention to the subject; and none of them are proceeding with that energy in the business which is considered as desirable, and which the wants of the church require. Besides, some of the presbyteries have considerable funds, and the means of raising more, but have few or no young men to educate; while other presbyteries have, by far, more young men than funds. The Education Society now formed, will be so far from interfering with the exertions already in train, that it will add vigour, and give more extensive and useful effect to them. It will form a great medium of communication between the presbyteries, as so many auxiliary societies, and give system to the exertions of all. It will open a central and convenient treasury for those presbyteries which have more funds than young men; and it will furnish resources for those which have more young men than means of educating them.

Such, dear brethren, are our views on the subject. We are persuaded that the subject now brought before the church to which we belong, is one of the most deep and vital importance. We entreat your serious and prayerful attention to it. It is manifest that the society which solicits your aid, cannot be expected to produce its due and desirable results, without the *general* and *zealous* co-operation of our presbyteries and churches. But with such co-operation, there is every prospect, under the Divine blessing, of rendering a service to our church, and to the cause of the Redeemer generally, beyond the reach of human calculation.

We venture, therefore, to express a most respectful, but earnest hope, that our reverend presbyteries will, as soon as convenient,

either in their presbyterial capacity or by committees, form themselves into societies auxiliary to this great object; that individual congregations, whose local circumstances admit of it, will do the same; and that all classes of persons who wish well to the cause of Zion, will come forward; and, with their substance as well as their prayers, endeavour to do their part toward furnishing the churches with the messengers and the Word of Life.

PIOUS PARENTS! will you not take a deep interest in this immensely important concern? Will you not be willing to contribute your mite toward the education of your own sons, or the sons of others, whose hearts the Lord has touched, that they may be prepared to serve the church in the ministry of reconciliation? There is a day coming, when to have contributed efficiently to the preparation of one able and faithful gospel minister for the sanctuary, will appear more important, and will afford greater pleasure in reflection, than the greatest mere temporal benefaction that can possibly be bestowed on mankind. Temporal benefits perish in the using:—but the labours of one faithful minister of the gospel, may be the means of extending blessings to nations the most remote, and posterity the most distant, as well as through eternal ages.

PIOUS YOUNG MEN! we call upon you to ponder this subject deeply in your hearts. To you, under God, we look for ministers of that church, which the Redeemer hath purchased with his own blood. We entreat you to come forward, and to consecrate yourselves to the service of that church. Can you make choice of any other profession so desirable, so noble, so God-like, as the ministry of reconciliation? If not, then pray for the prosperity of this society; endeavour to excite the zeal and liberality of others for its support; and crown all by devoting yourself to the holy cause which it is formed to promote.

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS OF EVERY CHARACTER AND AGE! the errand on which we come to you in this address, is no common one! We have all too long neglected our duty to the church of God. Let us, then, humbled by the past, and animated by the prospects of the future, rouse from our lethargy, and begin to act in earnest. Our Master requires it of us. The calls of destitute churches, who can find none to break to them the bread of life, require it of us. The cries of frontier settlements, who look and entreat in vain for missionaries, require it of us. The miseries of the poor heathen, who are perishing by millions for lack of knowledge, require it of us. Yes, brethren, if you love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; if you love the Church to which you belong; if you wish to prevent a famine of the word of life from desolating our land,—Come forward, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

By order of the managers,

ROBERT RALSTON, *president.*

E. S. Ely, *Corresponding Sec'y.*

MISCELLANEOUS.

FROM THE LONDON BAPTIST MAGAZINE.

THE GREAT PHYSICIAN.

Walking, lately, into a village, to publish the glad tidings of salvation I passed by the Bedford hospital. On inquiry, I found that it had been built principally by the munificence of the late Mr. Whitbread and his father.—Surely, thought I, multitudes of the most wretched of the human race, restored to health and vigour, and returning to the bosom of their families, shall bless their memory, and praise the great Giver of all good, who put it into their hearts, to erect, for the most benign of purposes, this noble structure. Am I wrong in supposing, that, as succeeding generations revolve, this great work, which they have done, shall be told for a memorial of them? I think not.

In imagination, I roamed from ward to ward—administered consolation to multitudes of the afflicted—and perused the records of the institution—and I really presented earnest supplications to the Father of mercies, that the sorrows of those who now inhabited the pile, might be removed and sanctified to their everlasting benefit.

The sight of this admirable building awakened a train of thought, which, to myself, was highly interesting. I was forcibly reminded of the large hospital, which it is my duty continually to visit, filled with persons exceedingly afflicted, either with moral or natural infirmities, and in many instances, with both. I, too, have my daily rounds of observation and exertion. Not, indeed, that I cure any of my patients by my own care or skill; no, my constant experience proves to me, that I can do nothing of any importance, without the presence and blessing of my adorable Master. Hence I am perpetually on my watch, and never pass many hours without affectionately and earnestly presenting some of the cases of the wretched to his kind regards. Perhaps, though I have nothing to record respecting myself, worthy of your notice, you would be gratified to hear a little of my Master. But, to say the truth, I know not how, and it is a frequent subject of grief to me, sufficiently to commend him: yet the subject is a favourite one, and I cannot dismiss it without sending you a faint outline of his incomparable person. I despair of ever seeing a full length portrait of him. Vandyke, or Reynolds, might here fail, without injury to their fame. I have never yet met with any colours which could possibly do justice to the subject. I mean to attempt only a slight sketch of a part of his distinguished character; and you will perceive that I shall be led, naturally, to speak chiefly of his admirable skill and excellencies as a physician. All other physicians are absolutely nothing, and can do nothing without him. Though surpassing in dignity the most illustrious monarchs who have ever filled a throne; yet, such is his amazing condescension, that if the poorest, and the meanest, and the most unworthy of my patients, humbly solicits him to visit them, he is sure to do it. I never knew him (and it has

been my happiness to serve him for some years) reject a single petition. Moreover, any of them who do indeed sincerely and earnestly desire that he would undertake to heal them, and who are willing to be guided solely by his directions and prescriptions, are certain of finding him ready to attend to their request. In multitudes of cases, he has visited the wretched unsolicited, and conferred on them the greatest favours. Isa. lxxv. 1. O. he is so tender hearted that you would never forget, could you but be an eye-witness, the affection with which he gathers the poor suppliants in his arms, and lays them in his bosom! He is evidently so touched with a feeling of their infirmities, that I do verily believe his whole heart is made up of kindness and love. He is so free and generous, that he charges nothing for the most extraordinary cures; and he invites, in the most liberal manner, all who have any desire to possess the substantial blessings he alone can bestow, to come to him with holy confidence. You will see that this is the case, if you will peruse the standing orders, which it is my duty frequently to publish, of the institution. The following most encouraging sentences are an extract:—"Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Whosoever cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price." His faithfulness is such, that he is always as good as his word; and never yet relinquished a poor creature, whom he undertook to heal, without accomplishing the work. So great is his love, that to remove every obstacle which prevented the restoration to health, and the eternal welfare of perishing multitudes, he once willingly subjected himself to unparalleled humiliation and suffering, Lam. i. 12. The sacrifice which he made, on that ever memorable occasion, not to "be thought of without tides of joy; not to be mentioned without shouts of praise," cannot be estimated. Of this only I am sure, that Peruvian mines are not for a moment, to be mentioned in comparison with the immense treasures which my Master has most willingly and joyfully expended for the welfare of the miserable, 2 Cor. viii. 9. Ever since sorrow entered into the world, my dear Master has been employed in its alleviation and cure. He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; and his power is so great, that multitudes of the very dead hear his voice," and come forth at his bidding from their graves, John, v. 25. But time would fail me to tell of his boundless excellencies.

You must know, that my Master has a multitude of establishments for doing good to the wretched, and exterminating evil, similar to that which I superintend. An account is kept of all remarkable transactions which occur, (and they are not a few;) and, when the whole of the sublime plan is accomplished, they shall be published for the perusal of an admiring universe. I do assure you, for I frequently examine the volumes, that there are pieces of history already written, which are truly astonishing. My Master has very commonly raised persons to health, whom no other physician could

possibly heal. People so afflicted with the palsy, that they could not walk a single step, have been made whole by his word, Matt. ix. 1—7. A woman who was diseased with an issue of blood for twelve years, and who spent all her property and was grown worse, came behind him, and touched only the hem of his garment, and was restored to perfect health, Matt. ix. 20. A miserable creature too, who had his dwelling among the tombs; who had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces; neither could any man tame him, and always night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones; when my Master saw him, he had compassion on him, and said, "Come out of him, thou unclean spirit!" and he obeyed his mandate, and the poor creature sat down at the feet of his Deliverer, clothed, and in his right mind, Mark v. 1—16. There was a certain man also, who had an infirmity thirty and eight years, and had been long lying at a medicinal pool vainly expecting a cure; as soon as my Master saw him, he said to him, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk!" and immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked. John, v. 1—9. Once, I recollect, as he came near the gate of a certain city, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and when my Master saw her, he said unto her, "Weep not!" and he came and touched the bier, and they that bare him stood still; and he said, "Young man, I say unto thee arise!" and he that was dead sat up, and began to speak; and he delivered him to his mother, Luke, vii. 11—17. I send you these instances as specimens and proofs of the infinite skill of the great Physician, whom I have the honour to serve. I could most readily enlarge my list with an account of blind people, some of them born blind, to whom he made a present of sight—of lame people, whom he enabled to walk—of lepers whom he cleansed—of the deaf, whom he caused to hear his gracious voice—and of the very dead whom he raised, Luke, vii. 22.

(To be concluded.)

ANECDOTE OF THE BIBLE.

The following anecdote is taken from a letter from the Rev. Leander Van Ess, a Catholick clergyman in Germany, who is distributing the scriptures by thousands and tens of thousands, among his poor Catholick brethren.

A merchant, who has many customers, distributed for some time a considerable number of copies of the New Testament, which thus became known both in the town and the neighbourhood. The inquiry, after this, became at last so brisk, that one day, more than sixty children of the school besieged the house for copies. He began to distribute: the schoolmaster came likewise to solicit a New Testament; after him the school mistress; he furnished each with a copy. The chief clergyman of the town, hearing of it, entered the school, and commanded the children, either to deliver the New Testaments to him; or to return them to the giver, since

it was a book they were not permitted to read. One child only returned his copy, all the rest kept theirs as a sacred boon. While this had just been passing, a clergyman of the convent of that place, applied, by a letter, for a number of New Testaments for his parishioners. The merchant, in answer, related what had happened: this filled with indignation all the clergy of the convent; some of them came in person to fetch his whole stock, and distribute them in their schools; this done, a venerable, pious, and intelligent chaplain, entered the room, and addressed the children in a speech of nearly an hour, on the value of the book they had received, on the benefit they might derive from its perusal, and on their duty of diligently reading it. This address, delivered by a man generally respected for his piety and talents, made a great impression on the children, as well as on their parents; and the universal sentiment was on the side of the New Testament. Now there was a flocking of old and young to the house of the merchant for New Testaments. He got together all the copies he could procure in his whole family, and distributed them. The town became at last so full of the news, that the chief clergyman declared from the pulpit that it was not permitted to read the New Testament of Leander Van Ess. A loud and general murmuring was heard in the church, and the majority of the citizens were much offended. The demand for the scriptures now became so pressing, that I was obliged to send him three hundred copies by the stage, which were instantly disposed of and I dispatched immediately another quantity."

POWER OF PRAYER.

Great is the power of prayer. The conversion of sinners, and the edification of saints, will generally bear proportion to the fervent wrestlings of God's people. It is a certain symptom of a revival when a spirit of prayer is poured out from on high. When the clouds thicken the rain approaches. On the other hand, it is a sure test of a declining church, when a spirit of prayer is restrained. Christ delights to be entreated. When church-members have no employment for him, he begins to go away. When those from whom the merchant can have any expectations are gone, and only a few children remain amusing themselves in the market place, he considers exposing his wares any longer as only a loss of time, and resolves to depart.

REMARKS.

To be of no church, is dangerous, Religion, of which the rewards are distant, and which is animated only by faith and hope, will glide by degrees out of the mind, unless it be invigorated and reimpresed by external ordinances, by stated calls to worship and the salutary influence of example.

Malevolence to the Clergy, is seldom at a great distance from irreverence to religion.

To neglect at any time preparation for death, is to sleep on our post during a siege, but to omit it in old age, is to sleep at an attack.

FROM THE LITERARY GAZETTE.

PITY.

How lovely in the arch of heaven
 Appears yon sinking orb of light;
 As darting through the clouds of even,
 It gilds the rising shades of night!
 Yet brighter, fairer, shines the tear
 That trickles o'er misfortune's bier!

Sweet is the murmur of the gale,
 That whispers through the summer's grove;
 Soft is the tone of friendship's tale,
 And softer still the voice of love:
 Yet softer far the tears that flow,
 To mourn, to soothe another's wo!

Richer than richest diadem
 That glitters on the monarch's brow;
 Purer than ocean's purest gem,
 Or all that wealth or art can show—
 The drop that swells in Pity's eye,
 The pearl of sensibility.

Is there a spark in earthly mould,
 Fraught with one ray of heav'nly fire;
 Does man one trait of virtue hold,
 That even angels must admire?
 That spark is Pity's radiant glow;
 That trait, the tear for other's wo!

Let false philosophy decry
 The noblest feeling of the mind;
 Let wretched sophists madly try
 To prove a pleasure more refin'd—
 They only strive in vain to steal
 The tenderness they cannot feel!

To sink in nature's last decay,
 Without a friend to mourn the fall;
 To mark its embers die away,
 Deplor'd by none—unwept by all:
 This—this is sorrow's deadliest curse,
 Nor hate, nor hell can form a worse!

Take wealth—I know its paltry worth;
 Take honour—it will pass away;
 Take pow'r—I scorn the bounded earth;
 Take pomp—its trappings soon decay:
 But spare me, grant me Pity's tear,
 To soothe my wo, and mourn my bier!